# THE 3 CATEGORIES OF AMERICAN JIHADIST TRAVELERS

Based on the underlying factors behind their travel, how they made their journeys, and which roles they took, Americans who traveled to join jihadist groups in Syria and Iraq can be classified into three analytical categories.

*from a new report by the*
Program on Extremism
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

## PIONEERS

- Arrive early in Syria or Iraq
- Attain leadership positions in jihadist groups
- Have critical previous experience: military training, bombmaking, producing ideological material, computer skills

### AHMAD ABOUSAMRA

Former member of the Boston area network of al-Qaeda supporters, who later traveled to Syria and became a major ideological figure for the Islamic State (IS).

## NETWORKED TRAVELERS

- Use personal connections to facilitate travel
- The majority of travelers are linked to other travelers or jihadist supporters
- Connected by families, friends, or community-based clusters

### THE KODAIMATI FAMILY

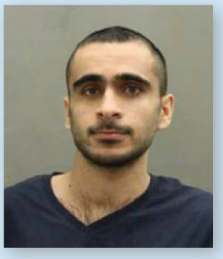
Father and two sons from San Diego who traveled together to Syria and fought for Jabhat al-Nusra.

## LONERS

- Seemingly travel without assistance
- No known personal connections to other jihadists
- May use online connections instead

### MOHAMAD KHWEIS

Virginia native who joined IS; later surrendered to Kurdish forces and was extradited to the U.S.



**THE TRAVELERS**
*American Jihadists in Syria and Iraq*

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